THE

# PRIMITIVE CHURCH

(OR BAPTIST)

# MAGAZINE.

No. CCCVII.—JULY 1, 1869.

## Essays, Expositions, &c.

### THE WORK OF THE CHURCH AND THE WAY IN WHICH IT SHOULD BE DONE.*

A SERMON BY THE REV. J. F. SMYTHE, OF YORK.

"They helped every one his neighbour; and every one said to his brother, Be of good courage. So the carpenter encouraged the goldsmith, and he that smootheth with the hammer him that smote the anvil, saying, It is ready for the sodering; and he fastened it with nails that it should not be moved."—Isaiah xli. 6, 7.

Just as in the First Book of Kings the prophet Elijah is represented as having a controversy with the idolatrous priests of Baal, so, in this chapter, the Great Jehovah is represented as having a controversy with the idolatrous nations of the earth. At this time all the nations of the earth were idolatrous with the exception of the Jewish nation: they worshipped lords many and gods many, created things and not the creator Himself; and in the first verse of this chapter the Almighty summons them to silence; he challenges them to prove the truth of their religion, and to shew that their imaginary deities were worthy of the confidence reposed in them—His challenge runs thus:—"Keep silence before me, O islands; and let the people renew their strength: let them come near, then let them speak: let us come near together to judgment." Having thus given the challenge, He proceeds to open up the controversy; and this He does by asking them a question, a question involving His eternal power and Godhead, His sovereignty over the hearts and actions of men. He instances the call of Abraham, which was the first great shock that idolatry received since the time of the flood. He says, "Who raised up the righteous man from the east?" Who raised up Abraham, and separated him from the heathen nation in which he was born? Who called him to his foot, to implicit obedience, to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance? Who gave the nations before him, the nations of Canaan which his posterity afterwards inherited? Who made him rule over kings, the kings he subdued in his rescue of Lot? Over these kings He triumphed: yea, before his sword and his bow they were as dust and stubble before the wind. "He pursued them and passed safely, even by the way that he had not gone with his feet," even

* The following discourse was intended for the Yorkshire Association of Baptist Churches, whose annual meetings were held this year at Rawdon. The author of the discourse was prevented by indisposition from delivering it, and has kindly favoured us with the MS. for insertion in the "Primitive." Our readers will peruse the sermon we are sure with interest, and we trust with profit.—EDITOR.

into a country which he had never before penetrated. Now who hath wrought and done all this, calling the nations from the beginning? Whose work is it? Is it to be ascribed to your deities, either to one or to many of them? Is it their work—their doing? Nay, verily; if the power had been theirs, they would never have exerted it against themselves; they would never have used it to undermine a system which it was their interest to keep up, they would never have employed it in such a direction as that. Obviously, therefore, the work is not theirs. Whose then is it? Who hath wrought and done all this? Who? Do you hesitate? Are you silent? Then I'll break the silence, and answer the question for you. I'll tell you who? "I the Lord, the first and with the last. I am He." It was *I* who gave the first shock to idolatry in the call of Abraham, and it is *I* who will go on shaking it till it crumbles to pieces and is no more. It was *I* who separated Abraham from his country, kindred, and father's house. It was *I* who sanctified him, ordered his goings, and made of him a great nation. "I the Lord, the first and with the last, *I am He.*" The verse that follows describes the heathen as alarmed at this striking manifestation of Jehovah's power. "The isles saw it, and feared: the ends of the earth were afraid, drew near and came." But though alarmed they were not converted; though, like Felix, they trembled yet they did not renounce their idolatry: so far from renouncing it, they clung to it with the greater tenacity, they put forth every effort to maintain it, they commenced making new gods, and in the manufacture of these gods each man did what he could to assist his neighbour. In the text we have a picture of their proceedings, a picture showing us that zeal without knowledge is not good, that there may be real earnestness where there is little or no intrinsic excellence. "They helped every one his neighbour; and every one said to his brother, Be of good courage. So the carpenter encouraged the goldsmith, and he that smoothed with the hammer him that smote the anvil, saying, It is ready for the sodering; and he fastened it with nails that it should not be moved." *Such is the picture of their proceedings.* This is *how* they wrought in the sad dark day of the prophet. *They* were heathens, idolaters; *we* are Christians, worshippers of the one living and true God. They did what they did, and said what they said in a bad cause, the the cause of error, the cause of Satan. Would it not be well for us, brethren, to emulate their spirit and imitate their example in a good cause—the cause of truth, the cause of Christ? If *they* manifested such earnestness, zeal, and devotion in the service of their master, how much greater earnestness, zeal, and devotion should *we* manifest in the service of our Master, "who is the God over all, blessed for evermore?" You see then, brethren, the use I mean to make of the text before us. I mean to use it as a passage that will enable me to say a few things about the service of Christ, and the manner in which we should engage in it. I hold that the attitude of these idolaters is the very attitude we should assume in relation to the great service, to which, as Christians we are pledged. If you look at the picture you will see in it the following features, which deserve our study and imitation.

First, there is *work*, willing and earnest work. Then, there is *division of work*, men working in different departments, the carpenter, the goldsmith, the joiner, the polisher. Then there is *combination in work*; not only men working, and working in different departments, but working together, working into each others hands, co-operating in one common cause. Then there is *mutual encouragement to work*; the word of sympathy passing from lip to lip—"Brother, Be of good courage;" a word calculated to inspire, invigorate, and hearten. And then there is *unity of spirit and design* amongst the workers; they are all animated by one spirit and labouring for the accomplishment of one and the self-same end. We have all these features in the picture before us, and we should have all these features in the New Testament Church. They characterised this synagogue of Satan, and they should characterise every community of believers. In the Christian Church there should be work; division of work; combination in work; mutual encouragement to work; and

unity of spirit and design amongst the workers. As it was said of idolaters in Isaiah's day, so should it be said of Christians in this our day, "They helped every one his neighbour, and every one said to his brother, Be of good courage. So the carpenter encouraged the goldsmith, and he that smootheth with the hammer him that smote with the anvil, saying, It is ready for the sodering; and he fastened it with nails that it should not be moved."

*The first feature in the picture of the text is work.* We see these idolaters working, each doing something in the service of his master, each labouring for a definite and specified object; and this feature, brethren, should characterise us. "We should be steadfast unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord." *The Master* whom we profess to follow was a *worker*, a steady, earnest continuous worker. His language is—"My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." "I must work the works of Him that sent me whilst it is day." His first recorded words are—"Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business." His last—"It is finished." "Father, I have glorified thee on the earth and finished the work thou gavest me to do, and now, O Father, glorify thou me." And between His first recorded words and his last, He went about doing good, went about Judea, Galilee, and Samaria, blessing the bodies and souls of men; binding up broken hearts, consoling penitent spirits, repressing vice, fostering virtue, seeking and saving that which was lost—*Christ was a worker.* "He came not to be ministered unto, but to minister and to give his life a ransom for many." And the *apostles*, His immediate successors and representatives were *workers*. We read very little about their resolutions, but a great deal about their acts, acts springing from the spiritual life that was in them and the grace of God that was with them. Take one leaf from the diary of the apostle Paul as an example. Writing of himself to the Christians at Corinth, he says, "In labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in death oft; of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one; thrice was I beaten with rods; once was I stoned; thrice I suffered shipwreck; a night and a day I have been in the deep. In journeyings often; in perils of waters; in perils of robbers; in perils by mine own country men; in perils by the heathen; in perils in the city; in perils in the wilderness; in perils in the sea; in perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often; in hunger and thirst; in fastings often; in cold and nakedness. Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches." Thus the apostle Paul *was* a worker; and what the Apostle Paul was in his day, and according to the measure of his ability, such should we be in our day, and according to the measure of our ability. "We should be followers of them who through faith and patience are now inheriting the promises." For *what purpose*, I would ask, were we called of God, and redeemed by Christ, and born of the Spirit, and translated out of darkness into light? For what purpose? *Not* that we may eat, drink, and be merry; *not* that we may buy and sell and get gain; *not* that we may marry and give in marriage; not that we may dream, theorise, and speculate; not that we may fold our arms in Zion and live a life of inglorious ease; *but* that we may glorify God, and witness for Christ, and benefit our fellow creatures, and leave the world better than we found it. *This is the work* which, as Christians, we have to do; and if we fail to do it, we come short of the great end of the spiritual being. The kingdom of heaven—the gospel dispensation—is as a man cultivating a vineyard, and almost the first question of every soul introduced into that kingdom, is—"Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" "Thou hast done great things for me; Thou hast plucked me as a brand from the fire; Thou hast made me a new creature; Thou hast given me a hope blooming with immortality and eternal life; Thou hast done great things for me, Lord, what *can I do for thee!* What wilt Thou have me to do?" And in response to this appeal the Lord assigns him a work, says to him—"Son, go work to-day in my vineyard. The vineyard is large, there is much land yet to be reclaimed and cultivated, the harvest is plenteous, but the labourers are few—

"Go work to-day in my vineyard." And he no sooner enters the vineyard than he finds work ready at hand; something or other demanding immediate attention, and presenting full scope for all his energies and powers. Again, "the kingdom of heaven,"—the gospel dispensation,—"is as a man travelling in to a far country, who called his own servants and delivered unto them his goods, and unto one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to every man according to his several ability, and said unto them, Occupy till I come." I shall be returning one day,—sooner or later,—if not before, I shall come to you at death,—to each of you. Until I come, occupy. Hold the talents which I have committed to you as a trust; use them wisely and well; trade with them and make them minister to my honour and glory. Thus, according to *Christ's shewing*, the true Christian is a worker, a servant as well as a Son; he has work to do as well as privileges to enjoy, work which only he can do, and for the doing of which he has ample time, space, motive and power. But alas! my brethren, how many are there, bearing the Christian name, who do not exhibit this aspect of the Christian character, who are idle and inert, who do nothing expressly for Christ? They work hard during the week for themselves and their families, they display much aptitude and talent for worldly business, they attend God's house on the Sabbath and enjoy the means of grace, they give their money for the support of the gospel at home and for the extension of the gospel abroad; *but* they take no active part in the work of the church,—either in its culture of good within or its aggressions upon evil without,—they put forth no individual effort for Christ, they do not work even with one hand, both their hands hang down in idleness, and when you ask them why they are idle? *Why?* With all the poverty, ignorance, and wickedness around them, and with the thousands of souls rushing headlong into ruin before them, they cannot excuse themselves on the ground that there is nothing to do, but they generally plead as an excuse the want either of time or ability. Now such characters are perfect anomalies in the midst of the church, they are like drones in the midst of a hive of bees. I have read, somewhere, that if you visited a colony of bees at a certain season of the year, you would see signs of commotion within. The working bees fall on the drones, sting them to death, and then cast them out of the hive. Now if something similar to this were done in every Christian Church annually, what would be the result? What a falling off would there be in our numbers! What a reduction in the statistics of our association! We have no wish to apply the test, we merely suggest what the effect would be if the test were applied. My brethren, *as far as we are concerned*, let us endeavour to rise to the full level of our duty, let us recognise our vocation as servants,—the servants of Christ,—and whatsoever our hands find to do, let us do it with our might. Since our enemies challenge us to earnestness by the earnestness which they exhibit; since Satan is earnestly plotting, and souls are earnestly perishing, and hell is earnestly filling, let *us be equally earnest*; and in all we undertake, let us remember the words spoken by Christ to his disciples the same night on which He was betrayed—"I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit, for without me,—apart from me,—ye can do nothing." The first feature in the picture of the text is work.

And the second feature is *Division of work*. These idolaters are all working, but they are working in various ways and in different departments. They are not all carpenters, or goldsmiths, or joiners, or polishers; but one is a carpenter, another is a goldsmith, another is a joiner, and another is a polisher. They are each occupying a separate place and doing a separate work. The carpenter is shaping the wood, the goldsmith is spreading it over with gold, the joiner is sodering it, and the polisher is burnishing it—finishing it off. And in the realms of nature and grace work is divided, and without this division there can be no effectual working of any kind. In the human body there are different members, but all members have not the same office; there is a distinct place for each member, and a distinct function for each member to perform. There

is the brain for thinking, and the eye for seeing, and the ear for hearing, and the tongue for speaking, and the foot for walking; and that body only is sound and perfect in which each member is occupying its own place and doing its own work. In John's description of the New Jerusalem we read that "the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald; the fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the tenth, a chrysoprasus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst." All the stones were precious, but each stone had its separate place and shone with a distinct and separate lustre. And thus it is in the Church of Christ. There is variety in unity, and unity in variety. All the members work, but amongst the members there is a division of work, a division rendered necessary by our physical, mental, and moral differences. Our characters are no more alike than our faces. We differ in temperament, taste, capacity, acquirements, circumstances and opportunities. The New Testament recognises these differences, and the church should recognise them and make provision for their exercise.

The apostle Paul says, "There are diversities of gifts but the same spirit, differences of administrations but the same Lord; to one is given by the same Spirit the word of wisdom; to another by the same Spirit the word of knowledge; to another faith, to another prophecy, to another the gift of healing, to another the discerning of Spirits, to another the interpretation of tongues." And again "God hath set in his church, first apostles, then prophets, then teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ," and these differences are to last "till we all come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." And hence, in the early church, there were the meditative John, the practical James, the zealous Peter, the argumentative Paul, the eloquent Apollos; and in the church of to-day the same diversity of talent is to be found, and the same aptitude for different kinds of usefulness. Some of us are engaged as pastors and teachers, we have given ourselves to the word of God and to prayer; others are engaged in serving tables, in conducting the temporal affairs of the church; others are engaged in the Sunday school, in tending the young; others in distributing tracts, others in visiting the sick: and others, like Dorcas, in making garments for the poor. Others, again, are called to glorify God in the exercise of passive virtues, in the exercise of patience, meekness, and calm resignation. In these various ways is the Master to be served, and that church is most healthy and influential in which every member is filling his right place, and doing the work for which he is specially qualified by the grace of God. What that work is can only be ascertained by an absolute surrender of ourselves to God; by waiting on God in prayer; by watching for intimations of His will; and by following the directions of His providence and the leadings of his Spirit. If we do this, we shall soon find our sphere of labour, and discover the kind of work which the Lord intends us to do. Having, then, gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us employ those gifts in the service of the Master; let all envying and strife, all spirit of faction and unholy rivalry be put far from us, and let us hold the faith in the unity of the Spirit and in the bond of peace. Let us be willing to be hewers of wood or drawers of water, to fill any office in the church, however humble, provided, that by so doing we can serve the cause of Christ, and contribute to the spread of his kingdom; remembering that we shall be rewarded by and by, not for the position which we may have occupied, but for the fidelity with which we discharged the duties of that position. If we are faithful unto death in any capacity—faithful to ourselves, to Christ and his truth,—after death we shall receive the crown of life which the Lord hath promised to them that love him. The second feature in the picture of the text is division of work.

And the third feature is *Combination in work*. These idolaters helped every

one his neighbour. The carpenter helped the goldsmith, and the goldsmith helped the joiner, and the joiner helped the polisher. They helped one another by each attending to the duties of his own department, and by each recognising the fact that what he did contributed its share to the completion of the whole work. By means of his own handicraft the carpenter would not have been able to make an idol in every respect approved and orthodox; neither would the goldsmith, neither would the joiner, neither would the polisher. But what they must each have failed to do separately, they managed to do unitedly. They felt their dependence one on another, and the value and power of co-operation. And if you look at society, my brethren, you will see that a law of mutual dependence runs through every grade of it which renders co-operation necessary to the well being of each and all. The architect's work is very different from the mason's, and yet they are mutually dependent. The architect cannot say unto the mason—"I have no need of thee." In vain would Sir Christopher Wren have conceived a St. Paul's in his mind and built it in the air, had there been no masons to embody his conception in form and substance. In vain would Milton have seen the glories of Paradise, and Beethoven have caught some faint echoes of its music had there been no pen to transfer to paper what the one saw and what the other heard. In vain would Phidias have created his beautiful Minerva had there been no pencil to paint it on the canvass, or no chisel to mould it from the marble. In vain would farmers have their theories of cultivation were there no labourers to put those theories into practice. Thus whilst there are different classes of workmen in the great social body, one class is dependent on another, and only as they act together and work in harmony, can they hope to turn their skill to any practical account. Isolated they are weak, united they are strong. And thus is it in the human body. The work of the eye is very different from that of the hand; yet the eye cannot say to the hand—"I have no need of thee." The eye and the hand can do together what neither the eye nor the hand can do apart. And thus is it in the church, in each separate body of believers. Whilst the members occupy different positions and perform different functions, yet the work done in one department bears upon the work done in another. The work done in the Sunday school bears upon the work done in the pulpit, and the work done in the pulpit upon the work done in the Sunday school, and neither Minister nor Sunday school teacher can work alone as effectively as they can work together. They are like so many wheels in a machine: to reach the grand result aimed at, they must work in concert, and the larger wheel cannot say to the smaller—"I have no need of thee." "Paul plants and Apollos waters." There is a connection between the planting and the watering, and each would be futile without the other. In a word, brethren, we may either be mutually helpful or otherwise. Ministers may help deacons, and deacons may help ministers. Ministers and deacons may help every other class of labourers in the church. By working into each others hands we shall aid one another, and the result of our combined action will be great and gratifying. Whereas, by endeavouring to work independently, by setting up rival interests, and struggling to maintain them, by cherishing a spirit of strife and faction, the least injury we shall do is to neutralise each others efforts, and render the church repulsive rather than attractive. My brethren, what we want in the church is a more thorough and hearty co-operation; every member pulling—pulling one way—and pulling together. There is plenty of co-operation in the world amongst the enemies of Christ, and there ever has been. How did the Antideluvians put shoulder to shoulder and hand in hand in their determination to resist God! How unanimous were the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah in the commission of sin, in corrupting themselves, and in their endeavour to corrupt others! How confederated were the Jews and the Romans in their opposition to Christ,—in their attempt to break his bands asunder and cast away his cords from them! How did they cry out as from one heart and with one voice—"Crucify Him! Crucify him!!" And the world is as hostile to Christ to-day as it ever was, and its votaries are

as firmly banded against him. And if such co-operation exist among the enemies of Christ, ought it not to exist among his friends? If *they* league together in their crusade against Christ and holiness, ought not *we* to league together in our crusade against Satan and sin? Verily, brethren, we ought. Instead of envying one another, and suspecting one another, and quarrelling with one another, and separating from one another, and keeping at a distance from one another; our spiritual sympathies should bring us together and keep us together, should weld our hearts into one, and give a common direction to all our prayers and activities. It is only as sailors co-operate that they can hope to bring the ship into port. It is only as soldiers co-operate that they can hope to win the day of battle. And it is only as Christians co-operate that they can hope to pull down the strongholds of Satan, and upon the ruins of his empire extend that kingdom which is "righteousness, joy and peace in the Holy Ghost." As much as this is implied in the prayer of Christ. "That they all may be one: as thou Father art in me and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." The third feature in the picture of the text is combination in work.

And the fourth feature is *Mutual encouragement to work*. These idolaters not only helped every one his neighbour, but every one said to his brother—"Be of good courage." They provoked each other to idolatry and encouraged each other in sin; and what they did in a bad cause we should do in a good cause, in the best of all causes, the cause of Christ. We should provoke each other to love and good works, and encourage each other in every holy and evangelical effort. We are so constituted as to need encouragement, and unless we have it we find it very difficult to labour. Sometimes we are discouraged, as Moses was, by an overwhelming sense of our own insufficiency, and by the humbling conviction of our own unworthiness; sometimes, as Mary was, by our characters being misunderstood and by having a wrong construction put upon our best intentioned actions; and sometimes, as Elijah was, by appearing to labour in vain and spend our strength for nought. Now when we are discouraged from either of these causes, when a gloom overshadows the mind, and under its influence the spirit begins to faint and to flag, how animating would it be to receive the visit of Christian affection, to feel the warm grasp of brotherly sympathy, and to listen to words welling forth from the heart—"Brother, be of good courage; be of good courage." Don't let the thought of your own insufficiency so weigh upon you as to crush all energy out of you, but in connection with your own insufficiency think of the sufficiency of God, and plead the fulfilment of that promise which he has given you—"My grace shall be sufficient for thee, and my strength shall be made perfect in thy weakness." "As thy day thy strength shall be." Don't meditate retreating from the post of duty because you are misunderstood and because all men do not speak well of you; but be of good courage and stand to your post. God understands you. "He seeth not as man seeth. Man looketh on the outward appearance, but God looketh on the heart," and if in looking on your heart he sees it true to him, his smile rests upon you; and if you enjoy his smile, you can well afford to bear any man's frown. "Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him; and he will bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday." And do not be weary in well-doing because you are not permitted to reap an immediate harvest from your labours; but be of good courage, and from what you see taking place in the fields around you, learn to labour and to wait. There must be an interval between seed time and harvest, and in due season *you shall reap* if you faint not. "The husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth and has long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain." Let his patience be yours, use the means, and leave results with God. I say, how animating would such words be to us when we are passing through the valley of despondency! how exhilarating to the mind! how bracing to the spirit! "A word spoken in season how good it is." Let us, then, perform this ministry of kindness one to another as we have

opportunity. Let us comfort one another with the comfort wherewith we ourselves have been comforted of God. Let us say to one another in every possible way—"Brother, be of good courage." Without courage very little can be done in any enterprise. Without courage what could Paul have done in the work of planting Christianity? But he had courage, and hence he was able to say in the face of difficulties, dangers, and death—"None of these things move me." Without courage what could Luther have done in the work of the Reformation? But he had courage, and hence he was able to say—"Were there as many devils as tiles on the house top, yet will I go forward in the name of the Lord." Without courage what could Carey have done in his attempt to evangelise India? But he had courage, and hence he not only expected great things from God, but attempted great things for God. And so, brethren, if we would hold on in the path of duty in spite of all opposition, if we would do our work with steady hand and strong heart, we must have constant supplies of encouragement; and in addition to those which can be derived only from God, there are some which we can communicate one to another, which flow from Christian to Christian. Let us render these as we are able, rejoicing in the power to revive the spirit of a drooping and fainting brother. "Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people, saith your God."

And the last feature in the picture of the text is *Unity of spirit and design amongst the workers*. These idolaters are all filled with one spirit,—a spirit of opposition to God; and they are all aiming at one end—the maintenance of the idolatrous system they had espoused; and their conduct, brethren, is worthy of imitation in a better cause, is worthy of our imitation in the cause of Christ. We may work, but unless we are prompted by a pure motive, unless we are seeking a noble end, unless we are using right means, we cannot expect God's blessing to rest upon us. What then is our motive? What are our springs of action? Are they selfish or secular? or have they to do with Christ? Are they derived from him? from our love to him and from his love to us? Is the power moving us to labour the same as that which moved the apostle Paul? Can we say with him and feel what we say? "The love of Christ constraineth us." The love of Christ constraineth *me*!" And what are we aiming at in all we do? Is our object to obtain a livelihood, to improve our position, to satisfy conscience, to gain popularity, or is it to win souls, to save them from death by snatching them from sin and leading them to Christ? And by what means are we endeavouring to do this?—by our own strength and wisdom—by mere book knowledge—by the weapons of theological controversy—by the use of rites and ceremonies, or by the faithful and earnest preaching and living of Christ?

Brethren, only as we are borne onward by the force of a Saviour's love; only as we aim directly at the promotion of the Saviour's glory, and only as we attempt to achieve this by the power of the Saviour's cross can we hope either to be blest ourselves or made channels of blessing to others. In all our public labours then, let one spirit move us—the spirit of love; let one aim govern us—the glory of God; and let one instrument serve us—the gospel of Christ; that gospel which is the same to day as it was 1800 years ago, "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth."

I think, brethren, it must be a source of gratification to us all that the secretary of the Baptist Union was able to present, this year, a more favourable report of the state of our denomination than he has been able to do for some years past. According to that report the Baptist churches in the United Kingdom have received, during the year, an addition of 10,000 members, or nearly five per church; 10,000 persons have been admitted into our fellowship upon a profession of repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. We have it on the authority of Christ, that there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth—over *one sinner that repenteth*; and if angels rejoice over the conversion of one sinner, surely we ought to rejoice over the conversion of 10,000 sinners. I trust, my brethren, that we do rejoice, and that our joy finds appropriate expression in the words of the psalmist—"The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad."

And the great things done for us during the past year should lead us to believe that the Lord is able and willing to do for us greater things still during the present year: that He is able and willing to open the windows of heaven and pour down upon us such a blessing as shall result in a much larger ingathering of souls than we have ever yet witnessed. And if we believe this, let us hope for it, and pray for it, and labour for it. And let us begin this morning by each one seeking a fresh baptism from on high; by renewing our allegiance to Christ; by dedicating ourselves once more to his service; by consecrating to him all we have and all we are; by confessing that we are not our own; by acknowledging that we are bought with a price; and by resolving that it shall be our supreme aim in the future to glorify Christ in our bodies and spirits which are his.

Brethren, the work-day of life is fast passing away, and "the night cometh, wherein no man can work." To some of us it may come, like the night of nature, with slow, measured, and foreseen steps. To others it may come at noon, suddenly and unexpectedly, like the night which overshadowed the Hill of Calvary. But, whether it come to us gradually or otherwise, it *cometh*; and when it comes it will put an end to all our work on earth. We shall no longer be able to serve our Master as we are able to serve him now. In the near prospect then of that night, let us be up and doing. Let us work while it is called "day." Let us work for Christ and for souls. Let us work individually and unitedly, diligently and faithfully; and then when the night does come—the night of death—it will bring to us the rest that remaineth for the people of God,—the sweet rest after hard toil,—the everlasting sabbatism of heaven.

## CHRISTIAN CHURCH CONTRIBUTIONS.

(*Continued from page* 125.)

IT is important for us now to look rather more closely into this matter, and to see its bearing upon a church not simply as a *whole body*, but also upon *each individual* composing the whole body.

A church, then, is a body corporate, a society, a brotherhood, having together the *same wants*, and, consequently, the same *mutual obligations* and the same *mutual duties*. When I say the word *ten*, or the word *hundred*, or the word *million*, I am speaking of *ten units*, of ten ones; so I am speaking of a hundred ones, or of a million ones. Without the units, without the ones it is impossible to get the total ten, the total one hundred, or the total one million, for the total is nothing but the units—the individuals that make the society or the church. This being the simple fact, it is plain that the church as a whole can have no duties, no obligations, no responsibilities but those which belong to the separate individuals that compose the church as a whole. Therefore, *each individual* of a church must, to be honest, bear his and her righteous share of church duties, church obligations, and church responsibilities: if not, some of the church are at fault. But to apply the subject still closer to the truth, and still closer to our consciences, we must remember that *nothing more than church membership is wanted* to lay upon us our share in church obligations. This is a fact that is too often forgotten, and too much overlooked. Does not every member of a church *use* the chapel? Then his use of it makes it proper for him to pay for a brick in it, or his portion of its other expenses. If this is not true, how is it that his use of his own private house is made the just ground of his buying the house or of his paying rent for it. And it is the same with public taxes. Queen Victoria does not get paid for her royal services to England out of the taxes levied on Frenchmen or Spaniards: Englishmen, because they are units of English society, have to pay the Queen's taxes. So says one of the texts now before us:—"Let EVERY ONE of you lay by him in store." This precept to "*every one*" is of necessity rendered binding on "every one," because "every one" uses the things for which the whole have to pay. This being true, every one of the members of a church is *bound* by *common justice* as well as by the precept of the Bible to bear his own proper portion of the common wants of the

church. Many professors of Christianity forget this entirely, and others treat the matter with astonishing neglect, and some allow their caprice to hinder them from doing their duty. Some members of churches will not pay their proper portion of cost because of an *occasional offence*, which makes the neglect the worse. Some people become displeased with the deacons who ask them for money; others become offended with the minister; others are annoyed because they were in a minority at a church meeting; and others get out of temper with some brother or sister, and others get disheartened because they do not see Providence favouring themselves or their beloved church; and on account of these things they refuse to do their financial duties, and so they make things worse by not making them better. I have been told a story of a wise old woman who had been talked to for years about trusting in Providence: so one Saturday night when she could not get all her work done through fatigue, she was obliged to leave the stairs of her house unwashed: she, therefore, set a pail of water, brush, &c., at the foot of the stairs, and said she would see if Providence would wash them for her. On Sunday morning, she found the water, &c. just as she left them, and she exclaimed, "Tis no use, this trusting in Providence; He will not help an old woman: I think nought on him, nought on him." Now this story is a fine satire upon the false maxims and mistaken conduct of careless people. "God will help those who help themselves." "As thy day thy strength shall be." Besides, God does not give people more *duties* than they can perform.

It is time for us now to consider the *doctrine of proportion*, or the extent to which each member of a church is bound to contribute toward paying for the wants of the whole body. "As the Lord hath prospered him," is the Divine rule. Now, if a church were composed of a hundred members, and if each member had a thousand pounds a year coming in, it would be self-evident that each member should pay his equal share of the church expenses. You would have, if there were five hundred pounds a year spent, to charge each member five pounds a year as his share. Then, suppose ten of these paid *twenty pounds* a year, and another ten *fifteen pounds* a year, and ten others *ten pounds* a year, and five others *seven pounds* a year, and ten others the *five pounds* a year; then all those who paid in excess of the equal division of five pounds a year, would be paying so much towards the equal shares of those who are not able to pay that equal sum of five pounds a year, so that the poor and the poorest, although they were required to pay something, would have only to pay what they were really able to give; and in this way the total sum required could be obtained, and no one member of the church would be oppressed, or need feel degraded or uncomfortable, for the equality of conditions would find their classes just as the Lord had prospered them. Now, this very simple and easy plan recommends itself as the Divine mode of sustaining the church in all its wants, and at the same time keeping close to the principles of "honest" morality. This plan is just what in politics we call "direct taxation"; it is what is now the English plan of "Income Tax"; it is a self-levy made upon the income that Providence gives to each member of a church. This principle and plan are what we call the "*voluntary* principle," as illustrated in church gifts for church uses.

But a word is required here in elucidation of the *true* in opposition to the *false* idea of the voluntary principle. Many persons suppose that the voluntary principle permits free-will offerings to be made without the least reference to the amount a person should give. This is a mistake. This is the false view of the principle. If this method were adopted by all, *debts* would be contracted, and the payment of them would be left to *chance*. This cannot be God's method. He says, "*Owe no man anything, but love one another.*" *Chance* gifts at a church or a congregation ought not to exist at all: or they ought to fall into a *reserve fund* for *incidental expenses*. Debts are at all times very unpleasant burdens. No honest man likes to have to carry the burden. They disturb the peace of Christians, for a debt is the excess of expenditure over income. If a man owes another man money, and if he is possessed of convertible property to

the amount of the sum he is owing, the amount owing is not properly a debt. It is so with a church or any other community. If a man spend more than his income, he is to the extent of the excess relying on credit; if he is not possessed of substance as a set-off against his debts, his credit is in danger. It must be so with a church. For a church to spend more than her income is to set her credit and, consequently, her honour in danger, because she is not "providing things honest in the sight of *all men*." This test of honour is an appeal to the universal conscience. This conscience holds the balances of common morality in commercial contracts and business transactions in and out of the church. Church officers, therefore, who are the executive of the church should, when they discover that a debt is being contracted, call the body together, and apply for means to clear the debt, and increased contributions to continue the expenditure that caused the debt, or for immediate authority to retrench so as to pay the debt and to avoid its repetition. The New Testament demands this, for it will not sanction debt. I am anxious that this matter should be felt as well as understood, for its importance can hardly be exaggerated. It is of the utmost moment to consider that if a man be loose in business matters this implies that he is loose in his habits, and if this be the case, it indicates a low degree of moral consciousness, and if *this* be so, the man is in danger of falling into immoral conduct in this respect; and this, of course, is dishonourable to God, to the church, to himself, and is certain to offend the conscience of society.

But this subject requires still further consideration, for the question arises, *How is it that the New Testament appeals to the universal conscience of society in a matter that belongs to the church, viz:—her religious gifts for religious purposes?* The answer to this question is, I think, very plain,—*that all money transactions in a church are like all money transactions in common society.* Commerce is mutual contract; it is buying and selling; it is simple bargain; it is, to a large extent, actual dealing with the world. A church does not buy her chapel, her coals, her gas, &c. of religious people only, but often of others. There is, evidently, nothing in church contributions that is purely religious but the *motive* and *object* of the givers. They give to God only in the sense that they give to sustain agents to do religious work. They give their money to maintain buildings, and ministers, and evangelists; to extend the circulation of the Scriptures; to support missions and schools. Now it is clear that in every one of these objects there is the element of all social contracts. The *building* in which the church assembles; its furniture, warming, lighting, and cleaning, &c., &c. come under social transactions. It is so also with the salary of all church agents; their *salaries* are payments for their time and labour, and to enable them to keep their families and servants. And this involves the transaction of common social business with the world—in house rent, tradesmen's bills, taxes, &c. It is so even with the circulation of the Bible—the paper, the printing, the carriage, &c., &c. are all social transactions. It is evident, then, that our gifts to the church are gifts for *religious aims by means of temporal and commercial contracts.* This being conclusive, it is equally clear that on this account God has appealed to the universal conscience on *common morality* as the principle upon which he requires his people to act in church contributions, church contracts, and church payments. *The church*, like worldly men, *must confine her expenses to the extent of her means*; and if she contracts debts and cannot pay them, she dishonours herself as does an ordinary speculator upon credit. Nay, it is much more shocking in her to do this, because she professes to follow the *self-sacrificing Lord*, which worldly men do not.

The apostle Paul for his *special object* advised the *weekly laying up in store till he called for the money.* And this, too, is an appeal to the principle of self-taxation in proportion to income. This then is the PRINCIPLE which is equally applicable to ordinary regular gifts for local church uses, and for all extraordinary and outwork donations. Consequently, Christians have to calculate the sum total they have to give away in a week or in a year, and so to arrange

thou so cast down; hope thou in God: for thou shalt yet praise him. Jesus will appear for all those who put their trust in him, and will lift up upon them the light of his countenance. Oh, that He would graciously be pleased to appear for me now, that I might praise, and bless, and magnify his thrice Holy name! When none else can help, then, dear Jesus, be thou mine helper. Remember me, as Thou didst remember Peter. Be Thou my deliverer, temporally, spiritually, and relatively. From all my fears, grant me deliverance, O my God! Let not my soul be longer disquieted within me. Jesus I look, I cling, I trust to thee. Let me never be ashamed: for Thy name's sake hear me now.

## V.—"RAMBLING THOUGHTS FOR SPARE MOMENTS."

1. LET Christians ever bear in mind that a time of trial may possibly be a time to weep; but that when the trial is sanctified, it is certainly a time for holy joy.

2. None but owls will turn a fine building into a ruin to suit their own selfish ends.

3. Let the little cur bark if it pleases; but the noble dog will think the barking cur beneath its notice.

4. The bee will gather honey from the dandelion as readily as from the rose. Honey is honey, wherever it comes from. And so, if we take pains, looking up to God for his blessing, we may gather honey from the lowliest walks of life.

5. The swallow leaves for warmer climes when chilling winds and gloomy skies prevail, for their instinct tells them winter is nigh. O that we were as wise to discern the signs of the times.

6. From the tough sides of the elephant, rifle balls fall like hailstones; but it is tormented by flies when they settle on its parts that are vulnerable. Let us never forget that we, too, have vulnerable parts, and be ever watchful against the flies of temptation which constantly buz about us.

7. The partridge is shot at by the sportsman who takes no notice of the crow. It is not always flattering to be let alone.

8. You may let the poacher off if you please, but I say, hang the shepherd's dog if he proves unfaithful: for nothing is too bad for a traitor.

9. I have seen some Christians who have reminded me of the fire that will only burn brightly when blown by the bellows; and so they only seem healthy when aided by the excitement of a revival. We want the steady flame of love to God, and love to souls, that always keeps strong and clear.

10. They are contemptible critics that only find fault with what they can neither mend nor understand; they are like to a raven criticising the song of the lark or nightingale. And such are all infidels and atheists who find fault with genuine Christianity.

11. If your principles are worth anything, you will never object to put them to a practical test.

12. There are many things in the world we cannot understand, not because they are unreasonable, but because our reason is not perfect.

13. Imitate the lark that sings anywhere and everywhere, and not the birds that sing only in the covert or grove.

14. Sing while you work, like the kettle, instead of sputtering like the frying pan.

15. Proud people are like to a glow-worm, that shines because it thinks the stars admire its brilliancy.

16. An honest man cannot match a fellow who does or says the opposite to what he means.

17. I have read of two lepers; one had *feet* but no hands; the other had *hands* but no feet. The one *without hands carried the one without feet*, who was dropping peas into the prepared drills. We can all help each other. Where there's a will there's always a way. What my brother-man needs I may be able to supply.

VI.—"A SEASONAL CALL TO CHRISTIAN PARENTS."

WAKE, parents of Israel! O hasten to plead
For the Spirit of grace to descend;
The word has gone forth, and the faithful have need
Of your prayers the great cause to defend.

Let pure clouds of incense be wafted to heaven
From all hearts united in one,
That wisdom and grace to our youth may be given,
And strength for the race they must run.

From the youth of our country shall armies arise,
The gospel of peace to proclaim;
O'er the land and the seas, the glad message that flies,
Shall re-echo Emanuel's name.

Wake, parents in Israel! O wrestle and pray
That grace to our youth may be given;
For the hands that in faith are uplifted to day
Shall prevail with our Father in heaven.

# Correspondence.

*To the Editor of the Primitive Church Magazine.*

QUESTION—NEBUCHADNEZZAR.

WILL you kindly insert the following questions in the "Primitive Church Magazine."—"Is the king Nebuchadrezzar, mentioned in Jer. lii. 30, the same that is called Nebuchadnezzar in Dan. i. 1.? If so, why was the name altered." ENQUIRER.

*To the Editor of the Primitive Church Magazine.*

QUESTION FOR STRICT BAPTISTS.

DEAR SIR.—Perhaps some one who understands the subject, will do the readers of the "Primitive Church Magazine" the favour of showing whether "Strict Baptist" churches are consistent with their principles, who allow their pulpits to be occupied by men who are decidedly opposed to believers' baptism by immersion, when the leading feature in their preaching is legality also. It seems to me far more inconsistent to allow these men to occupy our pulpits, than it does to allow an unbaptised person to sit at the Lord's table. In the one case the man is a teacher of what he professes to believe and what he does not believe. In the other case he is not a teacher, therefore he has less opportunity to resist truth. I cannot understand how a person can be a "Strict Baptist" who does not unite both. "He that is not for us is against us." As a "Strict Baptist" I want only to know what is the truth on the point.—I am, dear sir, Yours respectfully,

SEEKING TRUTH.

# Poetry.

LYRICS FOR THE HEART.—"GOD HAS NO FLOWER WHICH WASTES ITS SWEETS."

BY W. POOLE RALFERN.

God has no flower which wastes its sweets,
Upon the desert air,
Where'er He casts the seed of truth,
His love is watchful there.

God has no gem of silver ray
Whose light is shed in vain,
No thing of beauty lives below
Unknown to Him its name.

No desert place however vast,
No cave in ocean's bed,
Can hide the beauty which He gives,
Or fragrance which is shed.

Where'er in this vast universe
His hand finds soil and root,
He comes to breathe the fragrance sweet,
And eat the welcome fruit.

Look up, then, ye who work unknown,
All hid your tears and toil,
God marks the spot where you now mourn,—
The hard, ungrateful soil.

From flowers, the work of human art,
And ever gay and green,
He turns to shed his gentle dew
Where beauty droops unseen.

To silent room where patience waits,
And faith exhales her prayer,
To hidden nook where oft love toils,
And sheds the silent tear.

Christ marks the eyes which weep for Him,
The hands which freely give,
The wakeful zeal which scatters truth
Which on His smile must live.

He sees the faith which toils and waits
Through long sad nights of woe,
That lives by hope when all seems dead,
Nor lets her anchor go.

He loves the spot where meekness sighs,
And struggles to believe,
Striving to find her strength and peace
In words which ne'er deceive.

From streets, and crowds, and solitudes,
Where pilgrim feet oft roam,
Where'er sweet faith exhales her love,
There Jesus is at home.

# Reviews.

*Topics for Teachers.* A manual for Ministers, Bible Class Leaders, and Sunday School Teachers. By JAMES COMPER GRAY. Vol. I. Nature—Man. London: Elliot Stock, 62, Paternoster-row. Cloth. Gilt Lettered. Pp. 290. Price 3s. 6d.

THIS is the most complete Bible text book of its class, with which we are acquainted. As to its arrangement, scholarliness, thoroughness, conciseness, lucidity, and attractive getting up, the work is a gem. If the remaining volumes prove as well executed as the first, this publication must supersede all its predecessors of the same order. We congratulate both author and publisher on their complete success with this the first volume of the series. How a work so ably edited; so profusely and so well illustrated; and so exquisitely got up, can be produced for 3s. 6d. we cannot tell. It is indeed a marvel of cheapness, as well as of excellence.

*Self Culture and Self Reliance, under God, the means of Self Elevation.* By WILLIAM UNSWORTH. Third Thousand. Stiff Cover. Pp. 78. London: Elliot Stock. Price 1s.

A MOST healthful, stimulating, and vigorous little book. Young people of both sexes should read it with the

deepest attention; and act upon its wholesome suggestions. Their future course must be beneficially influenced by a practical submission to the teachings of Mr. Unsworth. He is a most judicious councillor.

---

*A Sermon; on Matt. xxi.* 37. By REV. G. PHILLIPS. Pp. 12. London: Elliot Stock. Price twopence.

A PLAIN useful sermon on the reverence due to the Son of God. The author's views are sound and evangelical; he is evidently thoroughly in earnest, and delights to honour his Lord.

---

*Christ in the Pentateuch*; or things Old and New concerning Jesus. By HENRY H. BOURN. Cloth. Gilt Lettered. Pp. 342. London: Partridge and Co., 9, Paternoster-row.

"THE desire of the writer has been, that he might under Divine direction lead his readers to discover more of the fulness which there is in the person and work of Jesus." Influenced by this desire he discourses to us on the memorial name Jehovah, the Passover, the Tabernacle, the Cherubim, the Burnt Offering, the Meat Offering, the Peace Offering, the Sin Offering, the Trespass Offering, and the Day of Atonement, endeavouring to deduce from these the evangelical lessons which they were designed to teach. He has succeeded in producing a most useful and interesting volume. We do not pledge ourselves to the acceptance of all our author's criticisms and expositions, but we always admire his tender regard for his Master's glory. It is far better to err on the side of seeing Christ where He is not, than of refusing to recognise his presence where He is. Mr. Bourn does not belong to the Rationalistic school, but reverences Holy Scripture as in very deed God's Word written. He delights to honour the Son as he honours the Father. We are quite sure that our readers will be edified with the book before us. We very heartily recommend it to their notice.

---

*Church Property and the Dissenters*: A Lecture, by REV. E. PARKER, of Farsley. Pp. 24. London: Arthur Miall, 18, Bouverie Street, Fleet Street, E.C. Price 3d. each; or, 2s. 6d. per dozen.

LET it first be known, that the Reviewer of the "Primitive Church Magazine," is *not* the Editor of that organ of public opinion. The pamphlet before us is the work of our indefatigable Editor, and we can say with perfect impartiality that we do not know of any pamphlet of the same size, which discusses the question of Church Property as satisfactorily as the one before us does. The lecture is remarkably free from all bitterness and heated temper. Its tone and spirit are calm, temperate, and Christian, affording a most pleasant contrast to those of the Bardsleys and Massinghams of the Pro-establishment party. Let *them* copy Mr. Parker's controversial style, and they will become much more respectable men. We trust Mr. Parker's pamphlet will have as wide a circulation as it deserves. It cannot fail to be of great service at the present crisis.

---

*Bible Exercises.* By MRS. LUCAS SHADWELL. Part I. Exodus I. vii. Pp. 96. London: W. Tweedie, 337, Strand. Price 1s.

THESE Bible Exercises are intended for the Family Reading, for the Cottage Meeting, and the Temperance Bible Class. The subject is, the Wanderings of the Israelites, a type of the Christian's Pilgrimage to the heavenly Canaan. The writer "disclaims any pretension to originality;" but she has put together, and informed with her own spirit, a very excellent, and instructive little book. Mothers and Teachers generally will find it useful.

---

*India.* Nos. I. and II. By HENRY LISTER MAW.

A MOST extraordinary performance, without the slightest order or method. Some of the hints are striking, but the whole affair is a complete *olla podrida*.

---

We have also received the following:—*The Hive, The Church, The Scattered Nation, The Appeal, The Gospel Magazine, The Sower, The Little Gleaner*, and *The Strict Baptist Mission Report, for* 1867, 1868.

# Mr. Geissler's Column.

MY DEAR SIR.—To the honour of our common Lord I can say that he has been with us, with our churches and our Mission hitherto. Though we did not see as many conversions as we desire and pray for, still we had the joy to see some, and to gather a few sheaves into the barn of the church of God. As for me, the Lord graciously granted continued health, so that I could be much abroad, and there was no want of opportunities to preach the gospel to smaller and larger audiences. Also, Brother Baumgärtner has been travelling abroad, preaching and sowing the good seed everywhere. Besides this, I sold a number of Bibles and Testaments, distributed Tracts, and sent parcels of such to the various stations. In some places, as in the kingdom of Saxony, the Lord has opened us new doors, and I ventured to hold several meetings, though we had to expect the police and imprisonment. In L., a small town, I preached the good word to a crowded audience in the churchyard at the burial of some notable person. In former times we were scarcely permitted to tread on their consecrated (?) ground, and to utter only a prayer there brought us a heavy punishment, which once I also had to pay. I find more and more that the best way is, not to ask for the one or the other liberty, but to take it at once, as if there was no question about it at all; and I hold that the liberty we need for our missionary efforts is not theirs nor to be asked from them, but it is ours; they, in fact, can not even give it us, only, if God permit, take it from us, and then their's is the responsibility. At the first public lecture I held in the kingdom of Saxony, where there were several persons of the higher authority present, I mentioned among others that "it is the birthright of every man, and though he be born as a Hottentot, to think and to judge for himself; and it is not only his right, but his duty, if he has come to the knowledge of some truth, whilst he sees others in deadly error, to tell them of it and freely to express his opinion, &c. Neither do I think at any time to thank the authority for any liberty having been granted us, for it ought to be blamed for having withheld it from us so long.

Here let me mention the recent fall of a special and horrid bulwark of Satan, which was the *compulsory baptism*. You will know from my former reports that compulsory baptisms, *i.e.* sprinklings, were the order of the day in the kingdom of Saxony. I had written formerly about this barbarism, not only to the ecclesiastical and interior ministry, but to the king himself, who answered that "he fully approved of the compulsory baptisms, as Baptists were not a recognised church in his land." After this I tried another way and wrote about these things in the public papers, which proved more successful. A few weeks ago there appeared in the said papers the ministerial decree which says in a long and broad way—to conceal a little the shame of the thing—that "compulsory baptisms were now abolished." So we have had last autumn the last compulsory sprinkling and our members shall have no more the plague and difficulties they have had in this respect. We consider this as a special victory, and would desire you to thank with us the Lord for it.

Just "*send them the Baptists.*" In a German and an American paper I saw, the other day, a letter (which was a translation from the English), from an American minister, about the Baptist church in Halle, where he had been last winter: after having said something in favour of our church, he mentions an incident which occured in the consistory of the clergy here. He says: "Also Tholuck (a doctor of theology in Halle), is a friend of the Baptists, for there was in Halle a poor and very wicked man, who was given up as a lost and helpless creature by every one; at last he was visited by a member of the Baptist church, who took much trouble to instruct him in the word of God, and bye and by he was converted. Tholuck, who knew this, proposed soon after this in a meeting of the higher clergy the question:—"What can be done to gain the poor and most wicked for the Gospel?" "Send them ministers," was the answer. "No," said Tholuck, "send them the Baptists," and afterwards explained the case and enforced the cause.

*A Conference of Baptist ministers in Stettin.* At the end of April, I went to Stettin, to attend the annual conference of the Baptist ministers of the church in Prussia. On my way to it I preached the unsearchable riches of Christ to a meeting in Berlin. The said conference in Stettin commenced on Monday, May 3rd, whilst I had to attend some sittings before-hand, being a member of the committee of the mission in Prussia. The conference was well attended, there were no less than fifty-four delegates, mostly missionaries, and a large number of guests present. Among

these, we had the joy to see here also Mr. Rauschenbusch, professor of divinity in the German department at the Baptist college in Rochester in North America. He is, I might say, a true specimen of Christianity, a learned man, and a professor indeed, but at the same time very plain and humble, a true disciple of Him who was humility itself. Formerly he was a clergyman in the Lutheran church, till he, in 1846, emigrated to America, where he became a Baptist. During the conference various subjects were spoken about, the mission, chapel building, antinomianism, &c. The Mission in Prussia, which commenced two years ago anew, is in a flourishing state; the Lord shows us by it that if only earnest efforts are made our labour shall not be in vain. Through the Lord's grace, I had to take an active part in this conference in various respects, and on the second evening I had occasion to deliver my lecture "The Baptists: who they are, what they believe, and where they come from," before a densely crowded chapel. May the Lord's blessing rest on all!

Passing over several other journeys, as well as the church conferences here and in Saxony proper, let me only say that through the Lord's grace the gospel has been preached, publicly and privately, by word and by tracts; the churches have been doing well, both ordinances have been administered, more ground has been gained with the new stations we acquired and the liberty we took; but "there is yet much land to be possessed," and therefore our watchword is to "go on," to which we desire the Lord's spirit and your prayers. In hope to hear soon of you, I remain, yours truly,

MORITZ GRISSLER.

*Halle in Saxony, May 28th.*

# Intelligence.

## GERMAN BAPTIST MISSION.

*To the Editor of the Primitive Church Magazine.*

MY DEAR BROTHER PARKER,—Will you kindly oblige by inserting this, and the enclosed interesting letter in the next number of the "Primitive Church Magazine." The enclosed letter was read at a small meeting held in Glasgow, at the end of 1867, when £6 were collected from the friends present. This sum was sent to the brethren at Cologne, who laid it up on interest as the first instalment towards the erection of their much needed place of worship. In March, 1868, the members of the little church, got up a weekly subscription amongst themselves, which has now realised the sum of 600 dollars (£90); but owing to their deep poverty, they are compelled to ask their brethren and sisters of Great Britain to help them in their work. One friend to the mission has generously given £50, and £2 have been since given. About £500 will be needed to enable the friends to arise and build. Will not some of your readers who desire the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom, at once render generous help to this truly necessitous and thoroughly deserving case? I shall be glad to receive and remit any sums that Christian friends may send.—I am, yours very truly,

T. W. MEDHURST, Baptist Minister.

6, *Doon Terrace, Pollokshields,*

*Glasgow, 11th June*, 1869.

"TO THE COMMITTEE OF THE LADIES' AUXILIARY OF THE GERMAN BAPTIST MISSION, GLASGOW.

"*Cologne, 14th, November*, 1867.

"DEARLY beloved Sisters in the Lord Jesus,—God grant you grace and peace. We cannot forbear fulfilling a long acknowledged duty, and approaching you by means of a letter. Since the 17th September of the present year, through your friendly aid, our dear brother Edward Scheve has been actively engaged as a missionary in this town and neighbourhood. In him, the Lord has sent us a man whom he has not only qualified to preach the Gospel in an attractive and affectionate manner, but also to feed the sheep and guide the lambs of his flock. You, honoured ladies and dear sisters, has the Lord of the mission inclined to procure the necessary means for the support of a missionary in this place, otherwise, it would have been impossible to place Brother Scheve here; and we feel ourselves constrained, ceasing not to praise our God for this, to convey to you also our

warmest thanks. We pray to God that he, according to his word, ("They shall prosper that love Jerusalem," Psalm cxxii.), may continue to bless you with much grace and peace. As you are so much interested in our town and the mission-work therein, a short account of both may be agreeable to you.

"Cologne, long one of the most important cities on the Rhine, was early made the see of an Archbishop. On the 26th August, 1248, the foundation stone of the so celebrated Cathedral was laid. A few centuries later, we see Cologne already as the second Rome, distinguishing itself by its outward holiness, as well as by the darkest superstition. At this time, it possessed 365 churches and chapels, and for centuries bore the name of "Holy Cologne." At the commencement of the Reformation, we find the judges of heretics in Cologne already famous, or rather infamous, while they are now hither, now thither, called to condemn heretics. It follows from this, that they must have had abundant opportunity at Cologne to practice the examining and condemning of the people of God; so we see that the pure Gospel had its followers and confessors here at an early period. In 1529, we see the martyrs Adolph Clarenbach and Peter Fleisteden ascend the woodpile; and Brother Osgood, from America, who is well informed in the history of the Reformation, especially as it concerns the Baptists, said, at the late Conference in Hamburg, "There is no street in Cologne which is not stained with the blood of Baptists." In spite of persecution, Calvinistic churches always existed here, though in secret. At the beginning of the present century, there were in Cologne several hundred confessors of the Calvinistic and Lutheran doctrines, but they were not permitted to worship in public. In 1802 Napoleon, first Consul of France, was residing at Cologne; and the Protestants of both confessions sent deputations to him, asking liberty of public worship. Napoleon granted their petition, and their first public worship took place on Rogation Sunday, the same year. Napoleon, knowing the spirit and the power of the priests, guarded the streets by military, in order immediately to suppress any uproar. Since then, the few hundred Protestants have increased to 14,000. At the present time, Cologne has a population of 120,000. Although, so far, a way has been opened for the Gospel, and the power of the priests is not the same as formerly, we still find horrible superstition and the bitterest enmity against true Christianity. In the Protestant church, the preaching of the pure Word is almost unknown. Whilst on its part, very much is given and done for outward affairs, still very little is done for the extension of positive Christianity in our own town, and now it appears the Baptists are called to carry on the Gospel in this place.

"As a grain of mustard seed, and in silence, the Lord has begun his work through us, the foundation having been laid many years before. Thirty-five years ago, a journeyman cabinet-maker, Jacob Keim, from Simmern, a Calvinist, came in his wanderings to this town, and, after a short time, married a very bigotted Roman Catholic. Soon after the honey-moon, the consequences of such a union showed themselves—quarrels, and disputes about religious matters were the order of the day. Life became insupportable to our poor Keim. "Stop," said he to himself, "thou hast married an unbelieving woman, and thy sorrowful life is the just punishment." He took hold of the Bible and tried to pray, but soon after he experienced that he himself was unbelieving. He now began to wrestle with God in prayer, and only after three years was he convinced of having received the grace of God. The anger of his wife was now redoubled. The priests declared to her that she was condemned if her children became Protestants, that she was freed from fidelity to her husband, and that it would be no sin, rather a merit, if she, for the welfare of the church and the glory of God should poison him. In the furnace of severe affliction this witness for the truth was strengthened and confirmed; that which he had experienced in his own heart he must tell to others. The consequence of this was that by his testimony some were converted here and there, and that our Keim became acquainted with a little band of experienced Christians, in the midst of whom he received comfort and edification. The christening of an infant by one of these friends gave occasion to speak of infant sprinkling—that it was according to Scripture was generally doubted. Our old hero, Keim, having become induced to search the Holy Scriptures came to the knowledge of the truth regarding baptism, as also several of these other friends. By the instrumentality of an Englishman, a brother from Stuttgart came to Cologne and baptised Brother Keim, together with the other friends, amongst whom was a Menonite from Holland, then living at Cologne. These baptised brethren formed a community to celebrate the Lord's Supper, into which unbaptised persons were also admitted. Simon Krygeer, the above mentioned

Dutchman, and Brother Keim, were the first to discover that this was not in accordance with the Scriptures, and after having repeatedly exhorted the other friends on this subject, but without effect, they withdrew from their fellowship. This happened in February, 1861. Previous to this Brother Keim had become acquainted with the German Baptist churches and their principles. Brother Köbner had held meetings here at different times, and had become acquainted with Brother Keim, who now joined the Baptist church at Barmen. Brother Krygeer followed, also his wife, and some others who had been converted by his instrumentality. Immediately after Brother Keim had been received into the church at Barmen, he was authorised to baptise and administer the Lord's Supper, at Cologne. His wife became converted also, and was baptised, and after a few years she died in the faith. The flock increased from year to year. Several newly-converted left the town for other places, where they proclaimed the Gospel to their neighbours. After September, 1864, the flock at Cologne, was visited regularly every four weeks by the Missionary labouring at Barmen. In the year 1862, the writer of this letter, through the grace of God, was baptised by Brother Köbner into the death of Christ, and incorporated into the Church of God. During last summer, he had the great joy of seeing all the men in his employment (he is a turner), seven journeymen and an apprentice, one after the other give themselves to the Lord Jesus, and enter the fellowship of the Church. We hope that under the guidance of Brother Scheve, they will become zealous labourers in the Lord's vineyard. They have formed a Young Men's Society, and try to induce other young men to join them. They meet at one o'clock on Sabbath, unite in prayer, and afterwards go out two by two to different parts of the town pointed out to them, (for instance, to the gates of the city, to the barracks, to the promenades, or to the cemetery), distributing tracts, inviting the people to visit the meeting, and, when possible, by word of mouth giving a testimony for Christ. During the last six weeks five thousand tracts have been distributed by them, and many souls brought under the sound of the gospel. From the beginning of the present year till now, partly from small regular contributions collected by the members, and from small donations received for tracts at the public places and streets, they have gathered for the Tract Society thirty dollars, besides having sold New Testaments and other Christian writings. The number of our members here is 38, inclusive of 7 in Müilheim, an English mile from Cologne. Our meetings, four a week, are well attended. Since September we have occupied a place of worship at the yearly rent of 100 dollars (£15), the necessary fitings for which were procured by the members, who are poor, with the greatest difficulty. For missionary and church expenses there has been collected this year nearly 300 dollars; taking into consideration the poverty of the members, an evident proof that they acknowledge the necessity of the evangelisation of Cologne. We thank our God daily that he has so graciously helped us hitherto, and has now sent us his servant, our dear brother Scheve. We believe that among the many German missionaries known to us, none would have been abler or better suited for this difficult missionary field than he is; and we cannot forbear, beloved sisters in the Lord Jesus, again expressing to you our warmest thanks that you have undertaken, by your liberal gifts, to support this labourer.

"Our place of worship is situated quite on the outskirts of the town, and at this part the population is very thin. Besides this, it has another inconvenience. The room is only nine metres long and four metres wide—thirty-six square metres, Parisian measure—and there is a partition in the middle by which the voice of the preacher is very much checked, so that the hearers in the second room with difficulty understand what is said. The removal of the wall, which would require to be restored on leaving the house, would cost seventy-four dollars. Our earnest desire is to get a suitable place in the middle of the city, but such would cost double the present rent at least. We have already meditated much about this matter, and inquired if we could not provide the necessary sum, but we must decidedly answer "No." Till September last we had nothing to pay for rental, lighting, fuel, or cleaning, as the meetings were held in brother Krygeer's house, or in that of the writer. For the members alone, a private room would still be sufficient, but if the Mission is to thrive, a large and convenient meeting place, in a well-frequented part of the town, will be necessary. We are therefore under the necessity of looking beyond ourselves for assistance. We feel confident that the Lord of the Mission, who has made your hearts willing in regard to the Missionary, will do the same with respect to the sum wanting for a more suitable place of meeting. From this you will see, beloved sisters, that we not only trust in our great God,

but also in you, his highly privileged children; and we are confident that such help would only be necessary for the first year or two, as through the greater number of visitors and increase of members, the higher rent could more easily be raised.

"Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen. We salute you in the Lord Jesus. From the members of the church of baptised Christians in Barmen, Cologne, and Mülheim on the Rhine. (In the name of the same, signed.)

"FRIEDR. SCHUER, Deacon."

## THE SPANISH NEW TESTAMENT.

*To the Editor of the Primitive Church Magazine.*

MY DEAR BROTHER. — Through God's goodness, I am able to state that new means exist for the circulation of El Nuevo Pacto in Spain. During the last few weeks, the work has been submitted to careful examination, has received new testimonies in its favour, and the expression of readiness on the part of new friends to unite in its circulation.

May I beg of you the favour to state that the following sums have been most kindly contributed, through the interest taken in the work by John Barber, Esq., of Norwich.

| | £ | s. | d. |
|---|---|---|---|
| The Mayor of Norwich, E. K. Harvey, Esq. | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| The Sheriff, John Robinson, Esq. | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| Mr. John Blakely | 0 | 10 | 0 |
| Mr. Southall | 0 | 10 | 0 |
| Henry Norton, Esq. | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| John Culley Norton, Esq. | 0 | 10 | 0 |
| J. D. Smith, Esq. | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| John Barber, Esq. | 2 | 0 | 0 |

I have also received from—

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| J., of Springfield Lane, Chelmsford, Essex | 0 | 5 | 0 |
| E. J. Oliver, Esq., of Walworth | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Sums before acknowledged | 72 | 11 | 6 |

Other sums will be thankfully received for this object.

Yours sincerely,

WM. NORTON,

*Combe Down, Bath,*
*12th May*, 1869.

## COLOMBO, CEYLON.

AN interesting meeting, in connection with the Strict Baptist Mission of England, was held at Colombo, Ceylon, on the 4th February. Mr. H. D. Gabriel occupied the chair. It is known to the supporters of this Mission that two agents are supported at Colombo. The Strict Baptists at that place have now, with much energy and spirit, formed an Auxiliary to collect subscriptions, and to render general aid as may be needed, so as to forward the interests of the Mission in the island of Ceylon. The Report presented on this occasion, after referring to the Mission stations formed by the Parent Society at Madras and Perambore, proceeds as follows:—"In Ceylon, the Mission supports brethren John Andriesz, and Solomon David De Waas (the latter under probation for three months), and Mr. C. F. Fernando is also supported by this society to carry on its Mission school. [Mr. De Waas has since resigned.] The labours of Brother Andriesz, which commenced 1st January, 1868, are exercised in Colombo among the Portuguese and Singalese, the former being mostly Romanists, and the latter heathen. He is carrying on his work in the following order:—On Sunday mornings he preaches in Slave Island, and in the evenings in the Pettah; on Monday mornings he visits Borella, Maradana, and Dematagodde; on Tuesdays, Slave Island; on Wednesdays, all round the Pettah; on Thursdays, Grandpass, New Bazaar, and Silversmiths' street. These places he visits in the mornings; there also he holds services in the evenings, commencing at half-past six o'clock. The writer of this report can bear testimony in a high degree to the zeal, activity, and faithfulness of this servant of God in the trust reposed on him by the Mission; and it is also his pleasing task to state that the labours of this missionary during the past year have been very much owned by God; some have been brought to the knowledge of the truth only in part, and others by the aid of the Holy Spirit have been called out of darkness into God's marvellous light; whilst to many more, at the same

time, the seed of life has been sown broad-cast in season, with the expectation that it will spring up to the glory of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. It is our prayer and hope that in this, the second year of his missionary career, he may have the joy and satisfaction of seeing the direct fruits of his ministry. Mr. De Waas, the other missionary, commenced his labours from the 1st Jan. this year, and is working amongst the Singalese heathen. At present, he is devoting his labour in the following manner:—On Sunday afternoons he preaches in Maradana; on Mondays, visiting in the morning, Dematagodde, as far as five miles; on Tuesdays, Maradana and its lanes; on Wednesdays, Borella, the jail and hospital; on Thursdays, Palliagodde. In the evenings he preaches in those stations where he is visiting in the mornings. The day school, under the care of Mr. C. F. Fernando, commenced from September, 1868. There is nothing very remarkable that we can report about it just now, seeing that it is in an infant state. The children, about 12 in number, are taught free, as being children of poor parents. The Sunday school in connection with this mission is mainly carried on by Messrs. F. W. Smith, Samuel De Silva, and Arthur J. Fernando. The number of children are 12, of which nine are boys, and three girls. The subscriptions received on behalf of the mission during the past year amount to £26 14s. 9d. In conclusion, we praise the Lord of the harvest for what he has already enabled his servants to perform; and confidently hope that He who has promised to be with his followers to the end of the world, will continue to afford us wisdom and strength, and crown our labours with success, to the honour and glory of His holy name. Amen."

The following resolutions, among others were passed on the occasion:—

"That this meeting desires to express gratitude to Almighty God for the success which this Society has attained in its operation during the first year of its existence in Colombo."

"This meeting earnestly solicits the prayers of all Christians for an out-pouring of the Holy Spirit, for the effectual working of all missionary societies for the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom in heathen lands."

The speakers on this occasion were Messrs. Silva, Blake, Wydeman, Van Geyzel, Smith, Vanderwert, Andriesz, and De Waas.

In conclusion, we cannot but congratulate the brethren who have formed this Auxiliary on the zeal, energy, and business-like tact which they have brought to bear on their undertaking. It is not often that the labours of those in England who seek to spread the gospel among the heathen are so well seconded by brethren residing on the spot where the missionary agents labour. The Lord prosper the work of their hands upon them, and fulfil all their petitions.

## GOSPEL OAK FIELDS BAPTIST CHURCH, ALBERT HALL, KENTISH TOWN.

On Lord's Day, April 25th, two sermons were preached by Rev. D. Wassell, of Bath, and on Tuesday Evening, April 27th, the annual meeting of the church was held. Tea was provided in the school-room, which was filled to overflowing; afterwards the guests repaired to the chapel, and the chair was taken by Mr. Wilkin who gave a brief account of the events of the past year, alluding to his own appointment to take the oversight of the church after the removal of the Rev. James Webb to the Baptist College at Bury. An interesting report of the Sunday school now numbering over 300 children was then read, and interesting and encouraging addresses were given by Revs. J. T. Bland, of Beccles; D. Wassell, of Bath; J. H. Blake, of Bow; and A. Hubert, from Norway.

## STRICT BAPTIST MISSION.

On Tuesday, July 6th, the Eighth Annual Meeting of this Mission will be held (D.V.) at Zion Chapel, Wilderness-row, Clerkenwell, London, (four doors from St. John-street). Mr. Hewlett will take the chair at seven o'clock. Mr. Wilkins, Mr. Williamson, Mr. Hazelton, Mr. J. T. Briscoe, and other ministers have been